





Design collaborations. Product cycles.

become involved at very different levels intellectually, socially and culturally, while we use new disciplines and skills, make new connections, challenge old issues and provide insight to new ones.

These new attitudes fit perfectly with a product cycle arena that continues to become increasingly more complex. It is a very noisy landscape, with many new forms of electronic communications that force us to understand and synthesize a wider range of information across a much bigger spectrum. In light of this increased activity, it is even more important to digest and distill a project's core ingredients and create a compelling product offering solutions that reflect the constant evolving values and emotions of our society.

New design solutions may not even be an object, as we're continually exhorted to create "out-of-the-box" ideas and look for new way of doing things. Making solutions for life may require an answer that's a radical new work-plan, a new distribution method, a revised production system or a new campaign. In practice, design solutions can be both tangible and intangible: a product line or a strategic plan, a tool or a process, a gadget or a theme.

Designers may generate profit for corporations, but can also produce emotional value for users, without presenting any creative conflict. Indeed, this is what every CEO is hoping for, to find ways to connect with the emotions of their customer. Mr. Chan calls it "Emotional Engineering," which can provide the meaning and core substance for a corporation's new products and solutions. He gave a perfect example in the recycling issue.

Now we use de-materialization, reusing recycled materials with only a limited degree of success, but there's still no universally effective recycling system or process out there. Perhaps the solution is not in recycling the physical attribute of the product, but to look for a poetic solution. A better process, maybe, would minimize the necessity of recycling by maximizing the product life cycle, by somehow recycling the emotional value of the object. If the users could create new meaning, we could allow products to continue into a second or third life, just by giving people more personally emotional incentive to reuse.

Designers must always look to help cultivate new opportunities and new solutions, most especially through new systems of value and emotion at work in our society. Since consumers expect different meanings and merits in even the most everyday solution, we must continually redefine the role of designer. As a final imperative, Mr. Chan resounded his theme: Design today is a very different kind of activity in a constantly changing landscape: now more challenging and exciting than ever. A Designer's vision and goal must be to develop compelling products or solutions that create a balance between people, society, and nature.